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OUTLINES
OF A
PRIVATE CALENDAR,
DESIGNED
TO AID THE CULTIVATION
OF
PRACTICAL PIETY AND CLOSET DEVOTION:
WITH
AN INTRODUCTION,
EXPLANATORY OF ITS USE.

"SO TEACH US TO NUMBER OUR DAYS, THAT WE MAY APPLY OUR HEARTS UNTO WISDOM."—PSALM XC. 12.
"I REMEMBER THE DAYS OF OLD; I MEDITATE ON ALL THY WORKS; I MUSE ON THE WORK OF THY HANDS.
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INTRODUCTION.

THE present publication originated in the interest excited by some questions, proposed in a class of Sunday school teachers of different congregations, assembling weekly for the purpose of scriptural and catechetical instruction. These questions* turned principally upon four points:—how far, and in what way the necessary sacrifice of sabbath-time by teachers, and their almost entire occupation with the spiritual interests of others on that day might be defended from injurious consequences to themselves;—how the time devoted to private religious exercises might be most profitably employed;—how self-examination might be rendered most conducive to growth in grace; and how relief might be obtained from mental distraction in prayer. In reference to the first of these enquiries it was particularly advised that, (while the heart should be duly watched amidst

its sabbath-occupations, and occasion taken, whenever practicable, to get as well as impart good from the materials of sabbath-labour,) a larger portion of time than usual should, if possible, be set apart upon some week-evening, or other convenient season, for the private duties of religion: and in offering counsel on the whole of them, the use of such a Calendar as the following pages describe, was recommended on the principles and with the object which the succeeding paragraphs will summarily explain.

Much precious time is lost by the christian in his closet for want of object and method. These deficiencies, however, indicate another, previous to both of them in the order of nature, viz.—a very crude and inadequate sense of the relation in which the devotions of the closet stand to the cultivation of piety in the heart and life, and their consequent value and adaptation as means to that most important of all ends. Nor is this waste of time confined to ordinary seasons only, it is even and remarkably the case on special occasions, when religious exercises are protracted beyond their usual length. It is highly necessary, therefore, that every christian (and especially the teacher who is anxious to redeem something of the time generously sacrificed to others on the Sabbath) should address himself to his devotions with a due appreciation of the exercise he is about to engage in, and the consciousness of an intelligent interest in, and preparation for, its several parts. He should remember that he is drawing near to God in Christ, to lay his worship on the divine footstool, in the offering of praise on account of perfections appreciated, and thanksgivings for blessings experienced;—to renew his homage to the Divine Sovereign through the Divine Mediator;—to make, (but not without the renewal of his plea for a gracious acceptance, grounded on the merits of the Redeemer's sacrifice, or of his prayer,—a genuine, earnest prayer, for the cleansing and strengthening grace of the Divine Spirit,) renewed confession of sin;—to implore the continuance of former and the grant of new mercies, and this not only for himself and for his kindred, but for others also, whether members with himself of the church and family of God, or still under the power of an unregenerate mind.

It is not hereby meant that an equal amount

* A few of them selected from the papers brought forward in the class, are here added, as it is believed that they will both illustrate the design of the present paper, and impart interest to its contents. To those who heard them discussed they may also recall other counsels for which this paper has not room. Perhaps, also, some who never yet have been impressed with the necessity of such enquiries in relation to themselves, may by the perusal of them have that interest excited which they so obviously and imperatively demand.

Question 1.—Are not those who are engaged during the greater part of the sabbath in the instruction of others, especially if they be young themselves, in some danger of losing the vitality and vigour of their own piety? Their time and thoughts being so much occupied with others on that day, are they not likely to overlook their own spiritual improvement, and to postpone the personal application of the sermons they hear, till the impressions produced by them have in some measure passed from the mind?

Will _____ have the kindness to point out the best way of guarding against this evil, and of rendering our efforts on the behalf of others, productive of benefit to ourselves also?

Question 2.—Is it desirable to adopt any regular plan in the devotional reading of the scriptures?

Should not some other time be set apart for the study of the historical and prophetic parts of the Old Testament?

Question 3.—How may the duty of self-examination be rendered most conducive to growth in grace? Is not its periodical observance likely to degenerate into mere formality,—or if it be desirable in some degree to regard stated seasons, should not a habitual spirit of watchfulness be also maintained by a christian? Shall we not more readily detect wrong motives and feelings by cultivating the habit of constant self-inspection, than by occasionally devoting a more lengthened period to its observance?

Question 4.—By what means is that fixedness of thought to be acquired which is essential to spiritual worship?

Question 5.—Is it a frequent case that those who are beginning to feel an anxiety on the subject of religion find great discouragement arising from the difficulty of controlling their thoughts? Is there not reason to fear that petitions marked by so much imperfection will be disregarded by God?

How is this confusion of thought to be overcome?

It will be observed that only those portions of the above enquiries which bear upon the calendar, are noticed in this introduction.

of attention is to be paid at all times to all these different objects, (the sequel of this paper will discover the contrary,) but prayer essentially comprises these several elements, and it is therefore a wise course for the christian, ere he kneels before the mercy-seat, to realise the character of his more recent experience, spirit and conduct, as well as of his condition and prospects, in order that he may know how to pray, and what to pray for, as he ought. Nor is a preparation of this kind at all inconsistent with the most obedient and cheerful acquiescence in such guidance as God's Holy Spirit may vouchsafe while he is engaged in worship; far rather is it helpful to those gracious visitations which constitute the sole vitality of christian prayer.

It will be obvious that in order to *praise*, the contemplation of the Divine perfections;—to *thanksgiving*, a retrospect of mercies;—to *confession*, a review of sins and infirmities;—to *supplication* and *intercession*, a consideration of our own and others' wants, is absolutely indispensable. The HOLY SCRIPTURES, (perused as they should be, not simply for the purpose of instruction in knowledge, but for conviction, recovery, and practical direction) are a means of grace admirably subservient to these engagements of mind. They reveal GOD and the soul, holiness and sin, the law and the gospel, heaven, earth, and hell, in their exact relations to each other; every necessary point, whether of connection or contrast, receiving illustration from them. They exhibit CHRIST in all his excellency, able and willing to save even to the uttermost all that return to God through Him. They manifest the necessary dependence of the human on the DIVINE SPIRIT in all that respects its recovery from the power of sin, and its enjoyment of communion with God. And the light which they communicate is not the uncertain, cold, and evanescent spark of speculation or conjecture, nor yet the torch-like glare whereby interest and passion delude so many, but a pure and steady, a cheering and invigorating light, the "day-spring from on high," which rises in us, and draws us forth to "walk while it is called the day." The perusal of the scriptures, accompanied with *meditation* and *reflection*, should, therefore, whenever it is practicable, and especially on the occasions already noticed, precede the offering of prayer.

It may be desirable to explain what is here intended by reflection, as preparative to prayer, and with what view this exercise should be habitually conducted. Reflection is obviously distinguished from simple meditation, which regards what is external to the individual, by having for its object, his own spirit, conversation and conduct. It is an exercise of recollection by which every thing partaking of a moral quality is brought under review, while conscience, enlightened by the word of God,

both indicates the degree of conformity maintained in reference to the sacred standard, and, in proportion to its truth and tenderness, recognises and applies the appropriate charge and *sentiment* of guilt. Duly to illustrate the character of this review as a *habitual* exercise, it will, however, be necessary to distinguish. Self-examination is indeed in every instance essentially the same process,—the process just described; but the circumstances under which it is conducted, and the object principally intended, originate a very necessary and important distinction. The New Testament in one instance, (2 Cor. xiii. 5,) inculcates an enquiry involving the suspicion of the reality of christian character; such, however, should by no means be the character of a christian's habitual self-examination. He is not required to be always suspecting himself of either hypocrisy or self-deception; and if such be his practice he cannot exemplify the spirit of the christian dispensation, or adequately fulfil the law of Christ. The proper spirit of a genuine believer is a holy confidence, not inconsistent with the deepest humility, or the most careful watchfulness, but altogether foreign from either an abiding or fluctuating suspicion of christian integrity. Believers should be conscious of the Spirit's seal within them, which seal consists in the *practical* impression of love to God, and hatred to sin. When consciously sincere desires after God and holiness have occupied and occupy the soul, their sincerity being vouched for by habits conformable, this, which must be a delightful state of mind, should not be causelessly disturbed. A professed follower of Christ may indeed—unhappily instances of this kind are too frequent to leave the matter doubtful—fall into such a deviation from the christian walk, or manifest such a departure from the christian spirit, as to render it an act of kindness in his friends to put him (as Paul did the Corinthians) on the enquiry whether he be not self-deceived. For analogous reasons it is sometimes the part of genuine friendship to persuade a merchant, manufacturer, or tradesman, to look into his books to ascertain if he be solvent. But as it would be a manifest impropriety to recommend every member of the trading world, whatever his circumstances may be, to keep up an unintermitting investigation of his books to get assurance of his solvency, (a habit which would by no means counteract excessive or dangerous speculation, to the same extent that it would paralyze healthful industry,) just such, and neither more appropriate, nor more profitable, must be the indiscriminating recommendation to those who, having been received into the communion of evangelical and well-disciplined churches on the explicit personal profession of their faith in and subjection to the Saviour, walk in apparent consistency with their profession, to regard the reality of

their religion as a matter necessarily uncertain ;— a something, the evidence of which, like the fabled cup of Tantalus, though always near enough to reach at, is always just too distant to be laid hold of.

What then is the object which should actuate to habitual self-examination ? It might be answered, that which actuates the thriving merchant. He looks to his accounts to see what capital he has or will have at command and *for use* at any given time. Or an answer might be given in the words of the emphatic caution : " Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed *lest* he fall."—1 Cor. x. 12. This caution is explicit. It does not assume that a christian cannot in ordinary circumstances know whether he is fallen or stands upright, (though one in a deeply diseased condition may not know,) but that he should consider a fall possible, nay even inevitable, unless he be at pains to prevent it. There are indeed two objects which the christian may and ought to have in view when he looks into his life and temper. He should open his eyes to his *deficiencies*, that he may confess and amend them for the future ; and he should consider his *talents*, *opportunities*, and *privileges*, that he may improve them not only for his own profit, but for the profit of many, that they may be saved. Our Saviour's affectionately serious warning, (Matt. xxvi. 41,) " Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation ; the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak ;" and the apostle Paul's admonition, (Gal. vi. 1,) " considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted," are expressions whose meaning is not fully understood by those who see in them only a general recommendation, implying the possibility of a fall, but not enforcing the necessity of habitual self-scrutiny in order to prevent it. On this subject, the apostle's own practice, as recorded (Phil. iii. 13, 14, and 1 Cor. ix. 26, 27,) sufficiently illustrates what in the last cited passage was less clearly declared.

We have been thus explicit in distinguishing the objects which characterise the different species of self-examination (which may be respectively designated the judicial and the practical) because we are satisfied that the former species, when causelessly repeated, prevents the due appreciation and cultivation of the second. And it is to be feared that many, very many, capable of better things, are thereby permanently reduced to a condition of useless inactivity and hopeless misery.

If the time assigned to devotional exercises, whether ordinary or special, be allotted in their due order and proportions to the engagements which have been described, (and what these proportions are it will not be difficult, with the assistance which every private christian has within his reach, to ascertain,) it will tend in a remarkable degree to cure mental distraction, and with the Spirit's blessing, without

whom all our devotions are an empty form, conduce to the profitable enjoyment of the hour of prayer.

Another condition of prayer which greatly tends to the cure of wandering thoughts, and the profitable use of sacred seasons, is *VARIETY*. Where this can be obtained, *without infringing on what is essential*, the spirit of devotion is very powerfully sustained. Formality is thus effectually counteracted, and an animated, animating spirituality becomes the prevailing habit of the soul. The object of the present calendar is to facilitate this. How—the interesting paragraphs which follow, and which are extracted from the 26th chapter of Mr. Sheppard's work, entitled " Thoughts, chiefly designed as preparative or persuasive to private devotion," will in part explain.

" In the earliest stages of life we can have but few private anniversaries. The year is comparatively unmarked by memory, and all its days are given to hope. Even the birth-day, which is early distinguished by parental notice, and the new-year's day, which general feeling or habit observes, are rather viewed in connexion with the future than the past. But the memorable days which succeeding years will recall, must multiply for each of us as years revolve. There arises gradually a calendar of our individual history ; and its anniversaries are far more affecting to ourselves, than most of those which the almanack presents. The period of our attaining some desired success ; of our entrance on some important employ ; of our embarking for some distant enterprise, or returning from it in safety ; of our solemnly assuming new duties ; of an endearing connexion commenced ; of other fond relations ensuing ; of some signal preservations, and of some poignant griefs, among which must be the successive dissolution of the tenderest ties of life ;— all these, in some minds, already augment the record : and some of the last must, in almost every mind, continue to augment it, till our mortal records shall be closed."

" Perhaps there are those so awake both to grateful and to pensive recollections, that this unwritten register, amidst all the scenes of passing months, rarely fails to be reviewed : so that few such anniversaries escape, without a degree of lively remembrance and appropriate feeling. To some others, A CALENDAR THUS INSCRIBED, still noting the additional days which are signalised as life goes on, MIGHT BE MORE PROFITABLE THAN MANY A TREATISE. It would be the briefest and most impressive sort of diary ; and *not omitting the seasons which nature or christianity celebrates*, it would add a still increasing number, which must awaken, as powerfully, the serious thoughts and emotions of the individual."

To thoughtful readers a great variety of interesting devotional occupation will have been already

suggested by the events and changes so feelingly enumerated in the preceding extracts. The latter paragraph exhibits what may be called the first draught of such a calendar, as is now in fuller outline recommended for devotional use. This calendar, as may be seen by reference, has an opening for every month, and a line for every day in the year.* Every opening presents four columns. Such occasions as those specified in Mr. Sheppard's first paragraph, and others to be mentioned presently, are principally distributable under the first two columns, which relate to personal and domestic interests. The other columns, which are intended, one of them for the spiritual, the other for the secular interests of the human family at large, as they arrest the eye of the christian philanthropist, have, however, an important use; for we are to look, and that both in practice and in prayer, "not every man on his own things only, but every man also on the things of others."—Phil. ii. 4. Thus, on the third column, that relating to the interests of Christ's church, or—what is the same thing, the spiritual interests of man, might be entered, on the anniversary of their occurrence, such events as the commencement of real and well-ascertained revivals of religion, the undertaking of important missions to the heathen, the births or conversions of the most distinguished instruments raised up by Providence to advance the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom; also providential dispensations of an opposite and mysterious character, such as religious persecutions, or the deaths, in the flower of their age or usefulness, of

* The lines occurring at the bottom of each page, and to which no figure is attached, are intended to supply room for additional records when any of the appropriated lines are full. When any of them are so employed, there should of course be a reference from the one to the other. It is hardly necessary to say that the distinction of columns should be observed in the additional as well as in the other lines. The space between the lines will be found sufficient for an intermediate line of manuscript by those whose hand-writing is small and distinct; such persons will not need the additional lines so much as others. The pages have been laid out in the form which, after careful consideration, appeared to be the best general form which could be adopted; but should it ultimately prove too small for any who approve of the general design, one of a larger size can be ruled by any stationer, giving two lines for each day, and greater width to the columns. The days of the month can then be inserted with the pen.

As some of the seasons which are very generally celebrated in the christian church, such as the day called Good Friday, Easter and Whitsuntide, being moveable, cannot be inscribed in the body of the Calendar, the blank page which precedes, or that which follows it, may be appropriated to them, by persons who regard their celebration as a conscientious duty. The annual commemoration, however, of the great facts of our Lord's death and resurrection, and of the promised effusion of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost can satisfy no intelligent christian. They are facts which should never be forgotten; while, therefore, there can be no inpropriety, and may even be an advantage, in their special annual commemoration, when not abused to purposes of superstition, a caution respecting this abuse is not superfluous. That a similar caution is not given with regard to the commemoration of the events for which the present Calendar is chiefly prepared, arises from the fact that these are entitled to occasional remembrance only, and may very properly take their turn with others. But those which are the subject of this caution are the cardinal facts of our religion, and the very staple of all christian devotion. They must not, therefore, at any time give place to other considerations.

any remarkably faithful or laborious servants of the Lord Jesus Christ; and, though last mentioned, yet not upon the whole least memorable, the first publication, when it may be ascertained, of works which have exercised an important influence, whether doctrinal or practical, on the interests of true religion;—especially translations of the Holy Scriptures or any part of them, into the various languages or dialects of fallen man.*

* As the third column of the calendar includes so great a variety of interesting topics, a few examples under each of the heads enumerated are here given, partly to relieve the distraction incident to abstract reference, and partly to aid in the selection of suitable records.

Revivals of Religion. (e. g.)—1. The remarkable revival at the Kirk of Shotts in the West of Scotland, June 21, 1630, when it is computed that upwards of five hundred persons were converted under one discourse, see Fleming's "Fulfilling of the Scripture," fol. p. 185, and Gillies's "Historical Collections relating to remarkable periods of the success of the Gospel, and eminent instruments employed in promoting it," vol. 1, pp. 308—315. 2. The great awakening among the children at Herrnhut, August 27, 1727, see Bost's "History of the Moravians," [Religious Tract Society] p. 230. 3. The out-pouring of the Holy Spirit on the Indians under Brainerd's ministry, Aug. 8, 1745, see President Edwards's "Life and Journals of Brainerd."

Formation of Religious Societies. (e. g.)—The British and Foreign Bible Society, founded March 7, 1804. The Religious Tract Society, May 9, 1799. The Sunday School Union. The British and Foreign School Society. The Home, Colonial, and various Missionary Societies.

The undertaking of important Missions to the Heathen. (e. g.)—1. The Mission of the United Brethren to St. Thomas, Aug. 21, 1732. Bost's History, p. 269. 2. That to Greenland, July 19, 1733. Bost, p. 280. 3. The Baptist Mission to the East Indies, Oct. 2, 1792. Brown's "History of the Propagation of Christianity," vol. 2, chap. viii. 1st edition. 4. That of the London Missionary Society to the South Seas, Sep. 1795. See the "Narrative of the Voyage of the Missionary Ship Duff," and Brown's History, chap. ix.

The Births or Deaths of persons raised up by providence to advance the interests of Christ's kingdom. (e. g.) Wycliffe deceased Dec. 29, 1384. Luther born Nov. 10, 1483, dec. Feb. 18, 1546. Calvin born July 10, 1509, dec. May 27, 1564. John Bunyan dec. Aug. 31, 1688. Richard Baxter born Nov. 12, 1615, dec. Dec. 8, 1691. Whitfield dec. Sep. 30, 1770. The Missionary Schwartz dec. Feb. 13, 1798. Raikes, the founder of Sunday schools, dec. Apr. 5, 1811. Oberlin born Aug. 31, 1740, dec. June 2, 1826. Dr. William Carey, dec. June 9, 1834. Dr. Robert Morison, dec. Aug. 1, 1834.

The conversions of eminent and useful Christians.—Where the dates of these are known it will not be denied that they will be among the most interesting of providential records. Such notices, however, will be comparatively few. Many of the most distinguished instruments of good, as the reformers, lived in an age when points of this character were not noted or ascertained for biographical purposes, and too remote from our own to be recovered now. A very large proportion also of those who have been made eminent blessings to the church, as Matthew Henry, Drs. Watts and Doddridge, and President Edwards, derived their first impressions from parental instruction, and their conversion manifested itself even to themselves as gradually as the dawning of the day. But when instances so remarkable, yet so different, as those of Augustine, Luther, Bunyan, Captain James Wilson, and the lamented missionary, Williams, can be rendered memorable and instructive by a record of their date, it would be a disregard of the operations of God's hand not to notice and improve them. Let the writer be permitted here to notice, that if the paucity of distinct records of this kind in the lives of distinguished ministers of God, be any sign of the comparative unimportance, as an evidence of grace, of the knowledge of the exact time of conversion, those who are accustomed to judge their own case too exclusively by this test may safely dispense with it for the future.

Religious Persecutions. (e. g.)—Dioclesian's persecution, Feb. 24, 302. Massacre of the Huguenots at Paris, Aug. 24, 1572. Of the Piedmontese, Apr. 1655. Act of Uniformity, Aug. 24, 1662. Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, Oct. 24, 1685. Martyrdom of John Huss, at Constance, July 7, 1415. Of Ridley and Latimer, at Oxford, Oct. 16, 1555.

Early Deaths, or deaths which may be characterised as mysterious providences. (e. g.) that of King Edward VI. David

The fourth column supplies fewer and different materials, but some of them are valuable. Great medical discoveries, such as of the circulation of the blood, and vaccination; important inventions, as for instance the principal applications of steam-power; humane legislative enactments, such as the abolition of the slave trade, and of slavery itself, in the British dominions; the foundation of important institutions of a philanthropic character, and the births or deaths of distinguished philanthropists, as Vincent de Paul, Howard, and Clarkson; all these, though not directly bearing on religion, may yet furnish, it is thought, even to a christian mind, a valuable variety of materials for devout consideration and thanksgiving in the retirement of the closet.

To the valuable suggestions of Mr. Sheppard, connected with individual history, a few may be added. Let the occasion, when known, of our first decided serious impressions, the date of our first public profession of faith in, and obedience to, the Saviour, of our engaging in the responsible work of Sabbath-school instruction or other christian employment, be introduced to give variety and interest to our perusal of this annual remembrancer. And if the time can be recalled of any solemn conversation—or prayer—or farewell address of a deceased or absent parent, is it possible that this could be recorded and reviewed without great and lasting benefit to the youthful mind?

It will of course be seen at once that all the columns above described, are by no means of equal interest. Fewer entries will probably be made in the fourth than the third column; and fewer on the page assigned to public interests, than that devoted to individual or domestic history. The interest in public matters is of course dependent on two things, the amount of general knowledge, and of public spirit. Where these are altogether wanting, which is far too often the case, the third and fourth columns must remain a blank.

Brainerd dec. Oct. 6, 1747. President Edwards, of small pox, March 22, 1758. Thomas Spencer, dec. Aug. 5, 1811. Henry Martyn, Oct. 16, 1812. Felix Neff, dec. April 12, 1829. John Williams, dec. Nov. 20, 1839. The Rev. J. G. Breay, Dec. 5, 1839.

The first publication of books, exercising an important influence on doctrinal belief. (e. g.)—Chillingworth's "Religion of Protestants a safe way of salvation;" Andrew Fuller's "Calvinistic and Socinian Systems compared;" and other controversial works, and Scott's "Essays" and Experimental Treatises. *That of influential books on practical religion.* (e. g.) Baxter's "Call to the Unconverted," Alleine's "Alarm," Doddridge's "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul," Wilberforce's "Practical View," and James's "Anxious Enquirer directed and encouraged." To which, as of a mixed character, but wide-spread usefulness, may be added Henry's and Scott's Commentaries, Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, Watts's Psalms and Hymns, and Divine and Moral Songs, and the "Original Poems," and "Hymns for Infant Minds," of the christian sisters, Mrs. Gilbert and Jane Taylor. Works, whose perusal has been greatly blessed to the soul, may very properly be thus commemorated in a private record. And it may be mentioned that though the precise date of some books, perhaps of several of the above, may be unknown, that of many may be immediately learned from the conclusion of the preface or the introduction.

The columns *may*, however, be too thickly filled, too thickly, that is, for the design of the present paper, which is not to recommend a large collection, but a suitable selection of interesting events. The object of this calendar, let it be remembered, is strictly devotional; it is intended, by quickening our attention to these movements of providence which concern ourselves and our friends, and enlarging our view of God's general providence, to impart variety and interest to our devotional engagements, but not to overload or distract them. The topics entered in the third and fourth columns must, therefore, be selected with particular care. None should be admitted which are not suggestive of devout and holy sentiment. None, it need scarcely be added, of an essentially sectarian character, and if any not essentially of this character should be found on trial to excite sectarian feeling, even they should be immediately erased, till the temper of the individual shall have become of better proof.

It has been ascertained by long-continued trial, that persons who have not time to keep a diary, or who do not approve of diaries as ordinarily kept, may reap great advantage from such a calendar as that now described; especially if it be habitually reviewed, in order that religious feelings appropriate to the particular events recorded may be interwoven with the devotions of their respective anniversaries. It was at first intended to append some passages from valuable biographical works, whence it would appear that this method, though not systematically organised, had been partially acted upon, and its value so far appreciated by various eminent christians of both sexes, but our limits will allow little more than a general reference to the fact.*

The character of the suggestion furnished by the record attached to any particular day is twofold. The fact recorded occurred this day last year, or, it may be, several years ago. Every such record then reminds us of the silent lapse of time, and the approach of eternity. This suggestion is improved by Mr. Sheppard, in a very interesting and profitable manner, in the chapter of his work already quoted, and is in harmony with the petition in Psalm xc. 12., "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

The other form of suggestion is derived from the specific character of the particular daily record, which will move the soul to adoration, thanksgiving, confession, submission, resignation, renewed dedication, petition or intercession, as the case may be. On one day, it is more than probable, one of these

* The reader may, however, find some illustrative instances in the life of Philip Henry, and those of Mrs. Elizabeth Walker, Mrs. Margaret Baxter, and Miss Linnard, of all which abridgments are published by the Religious Tract Society, in their series of Christian Biography.

feelings may be prominently excited; on another, a different feeling; but all will in turn add their variety of interest to the duties and emotions of the passing day. "*Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations.*"—Deut. xxxii. 7. "*I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the works of thy hands; I stretch forth my hands unto thee.*"—Ps. cxliii. 3, 4*.

The belief may, in conclusion, be expressed, that to many young persons the use of such a calendar may be made subservient to important intellectual cultivation. This is, it is true, a secondary consideration, yet it has its value. That genuine religion produces the most surprising effects on the condition of the human intellect is matter of common knowledge. It eyes new objects, generates new ideas, counteracts man's natural but morbid disaffection to spiritual light, evolves a vast variety of new relations, and is the spring of an amazing elevation and expansion of moral and spiritual feeling. Such is religion in its psychological effects. The character of these new interests, so far as they do not concern the individual merely, has been indicated in the suggestions offered respecting the third and fourth columns of the calendar. Such are the events respecting which a christian mind needs only information to feel alive to them. Their mention then necessitates the enquiry: What are these occasions—who were those individuals—whose memory should be precious to the saints, and whose memorial is available to the cultivation of piety? Some, it is hoped, may be attracted to the study of the history of the christian church and of exemplary christian biography, who, but for such an enquiry, might almost entirely have neglected them. Others will, perhaps, peruse those valuable writings with much more of devout reflection than they had ever previously done. And if, in addition to this, the practice were kept up of writing in a companion volume to the Calendar, (whether of the same sized page or not, is immaterial,) historical and biographical extracts relating to the events deemed worthy of notice in it, and didactic and other extracts or pieces, whether in prose or poetry, congenial with the entries of private and domestic interest, such as (e.g.) many of the brief reflections which may be found in the writings of Matthew Henry or Mr. Jay, or the experimental hymns of Cowper, it is obvious that such a habit, with the occasional consultation of the volume, might advance both the intellectual and spiritual improvement of the young to a very remarkable extent.

* The duty and benefit of turning to practical account that flow of sacred feeling which christians sometimes experience, in a peculiar manner, as the Holy Spirit's blessing on the public or private exercises of religion, is enforced with great persuasiveness and power by the late Mr. Hall, in his piece upon the Holy Spirit, (Religious Tract Society, No. 111,) a tract which every Sunday school teacher should frequently peruse, and which indeed cannot be too much recommended to the young.

RESOLUTIONS CONDUCTIVE TO PRACTICAL PIETY, AND THE RIGHT USE OF THE SCRIPTURES, MEDITATION, AND PRAYER, (ABRIDGED FROM PRESIDENT EDWARDS'S LIFE AND JOURNAL.)

1. That I will live so, as I shall wish I had done, when I come to die:—so, at all times, as I think is best, when I have the clearest notions of the things of the gospel and another world.

2. To endeavour to obtain for myself as much happiness in the other world as I possibly can; and to improve every opportunity, when I am in the best and happiest frame of mind, to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, and consecrate myself wholly to him.

3. Never to do any thing, of which I so much question the lawfulness, as that I intend, at the same time, to consider and examine afterwards, whether it be lawful or not:—unless I as much question the lawfulness of the omission.

4. When I fear misfortunes and adversity, to examine whether I have done my duty, resolve to do it, and let the event be just as providence may order it. I will, as far as I can, be concerned about nothing but my duty and my sin.

5. After afflictions, to enquire what I am the better for them; what good I have got—and what I might have got by them.

6. Never to allow the least fretting or uneasiness at my father or mother; or suffer any effects of it, so much as in the least alteration of speech or motion of my eye. To be especially careful of it with respect to any of our family.

7. Never to say any thing against any body, but when it is perfectly agreeable to the highest degree of christian love, and to the lowest humility and sense of my own failings.

8. To do always what I can towards making, maintaining, and preserving peace, when it can be done without an over-balancing detriment in other respects.

9. Never to suffer the least motions of anger towards irrational beings.

10. To study the Scriptures so steadily, constantly and frequently, as that I may find, and plainly perceive myself to grow in the knowledge of them.

11. Very much to exercise myself in this, all my life long, viz. with the greatest openness of which I am capable, to declare my ways to God, and lay open my soul to him,—with all my sins, temptations, difficulties, sorrows, fears, hopes, desires, and every thing, and every circumstance, according to Dr. Manton's sermon on the 119th Psalm.

12. Never to count that a prayer, or let that pass as a prayer, or a petition of a prayer, which is so made, that I cannot hope that God will answer it; or that as a confession which I cannot hope God will accept.

13. When I find those 'groanings which cannot be uttered,' of which the apostle speaks, and that longing of soul of which the psalmist speaks, Ps. cxix. 20, that I will promote them to the utmost of my power; and that I will not be weary of earnestly endeavouring to vent my desires, or of the repetitions of such earnestness.

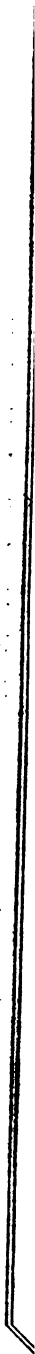
14. That I will not give way to that listlessness which I find unbends and relaxes my mind from being fully and fixedly set on religion, whatever excuse I may have for it, as that what my listlessness inclines me to do, is best to be done, &c.

15. To enquire every night as I am going to bed, wherein I have been negligent, what sin I have committed, and wherein I have denied myself:—also at the end of every week, month, and year.

ENQUIRIES IMITATED FROM THE GOLDEN VERSES OF PYTHAGORAS, BY DR. ISAAC WATTS.

(THE LAST TWO LINES SLIGHTLY ALTERED.)

Nor let soft slumbers close mine eyes,
Before I've recollected thrice
The train of actions through the day.
Where have my feet marked out their way?
What have I learned—where'er I've been—
From all I've heard?—from all I've seen?
What know I more that's worth the knowing?
What have I done that's worth the doing?
What have I sought that I should shun?
What duties have I left undone?
Or into what new follies run?
These self-enquiries fence the road
That leads me to my best abode.



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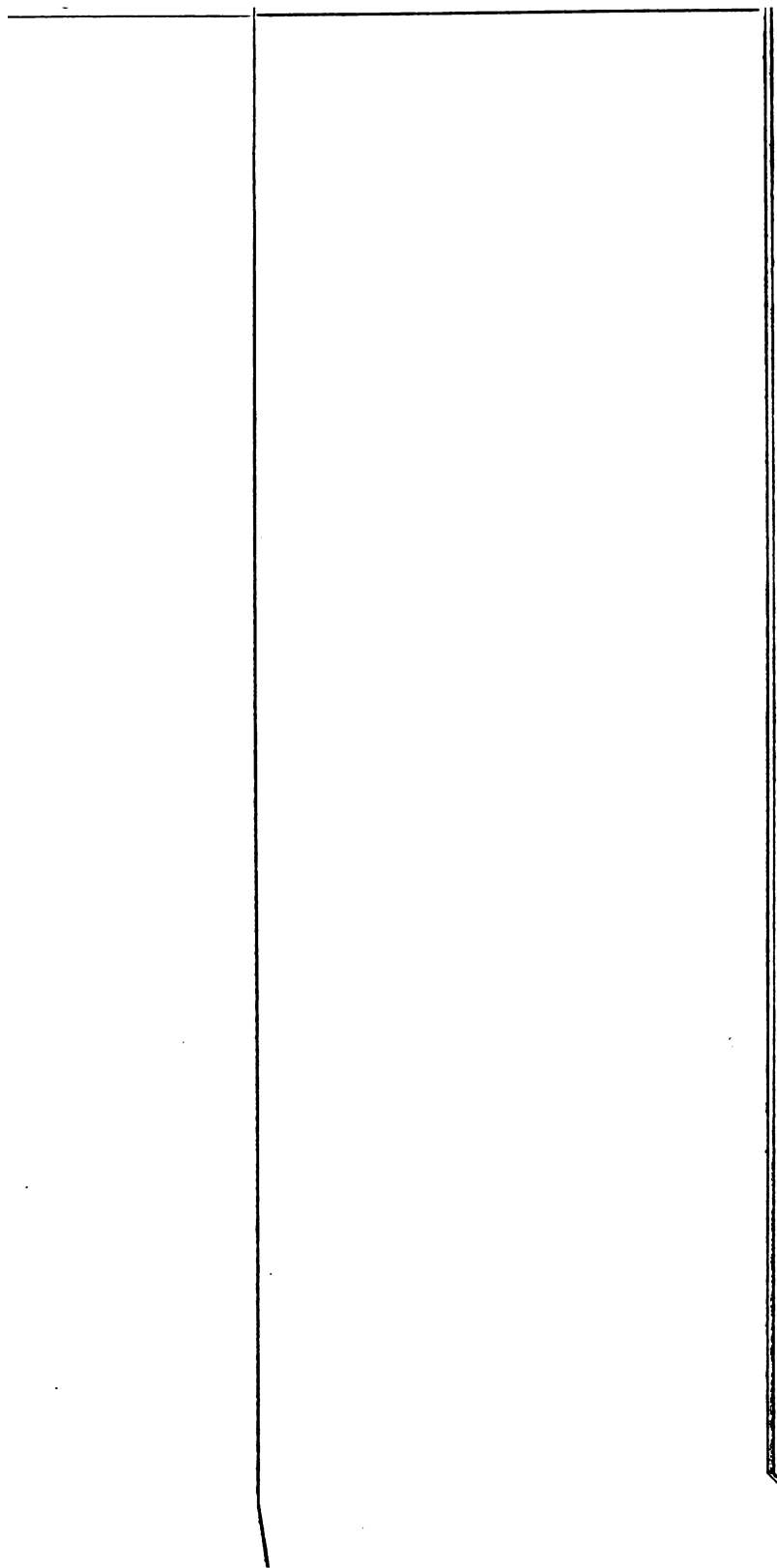
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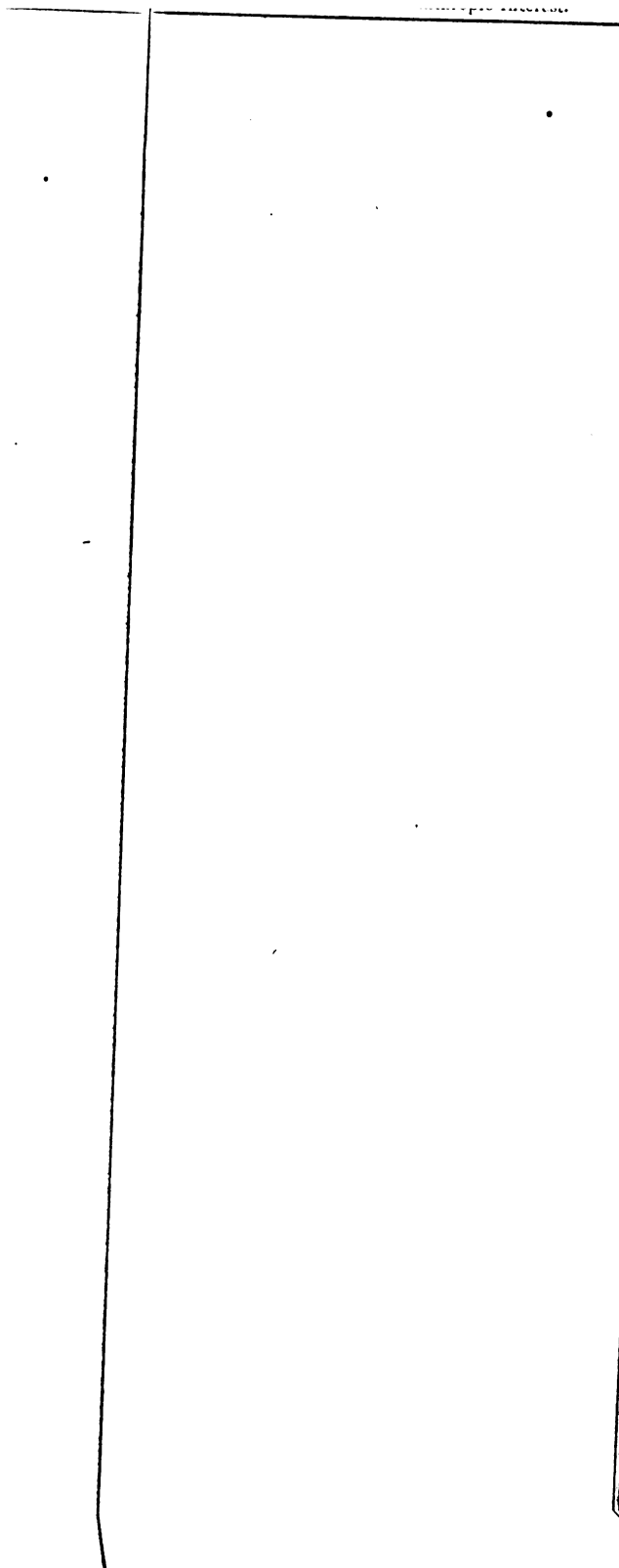
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